

## Diane M. Scully

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**From:** John Rosenlund  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 8, 2015 12:07 PM  
**Cc:** Diane M. Scully  
**Subject:** Draft AT Position papers in the email body

**Importance:** High

Trying to ensure the optimal viewing the drafts of the AT Position papers are pasted in this email. I took the liberty of accepting the tracked changes for this email for reading purposes. A header with the Authors name is at the top of each section, in order, as follows: Mr. Patchett's draft, Mr. Youngs' draft, and finally Mr. Rosenlunds' draft.

### **Brian Patchett's draft:**

Position or White Paper on Assistive Technology by the Assistive Technology Council

Acquiring appropriate assistive technology, for many people with disabilities, is critical to succeeding in life's pursuits including education, employment, living independently, and recreation. Those of us with disabilities, and our loved ones, know that technology can make all the difference in our lives. The Assistive Technology Council therefore asserts that all persons with disabilities, regardless of age or life situation, must have access to life empowering assistive technology to truly succeed.

What is assistive technology? Assistive technology (AT) is a device, process, or system that gives one with a disability greater independence. Examples of AT include magnifying glasses, talking computers, phones, and Braille-output for persons who are visually impaired; communication devices for people who are unable to speak; adapted switches, keyboards, and driving controls for persons who have trouble accessing standard keyboards and other input devices; voice input or speaking through a phone or computer for those unable to type or persons who have learning or intellectual disabilities; and finally, mobility devices such as wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, etc.

AT may also include processes and systems that make a home or workplace more accessible, such as modifying some parts of job descriptions or changing the way paper files are accessed. Additionally, through adaptive recreation devices, people with disabilities can access sports, such as tennis, rugby, golf, skiing, hunting, fishing, parachuting, hiking, rock climbing and many other fun and exciting recreational activities.

Therefore, it is our strong position that the Nevada Legislature work with state entities to fund appropriate AT services for all children, adults, veterans, and seniors.

These services are critical to success:

- 1) Person-centered assistive technology evaluation or assessment.
- 2) Purchase of appropriate AT based on assessment.
- 3) Installation and set-up of AT devices.
- 4) Adequate training on these devices.

Anytime one makes purchases of technology, typically, one seeks out experts and then may try out different technology, such as phones or computers, and many become experts as they utilize this technology and are then able to help others. This critical decision about which technology to use will make the difference in a

child receiving an appropriate education, a computer programmer performing his or her job, a veteran re-entering civilian life, or a senior who wants to remain active and engaged in the community. Truly, it is our obligation, as Nevadans, to provide this bridge for our brothers and sisters.

Many who have been fortunate enough to receive AT have become very successful in employment and independence in the community. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Nevadans with disabilities have not received timely and appropriate access to AT.

We need to ensure that children entering school receive these services, and once they acquire appropriate technology, that they are able to use it both at school and at home.

Those seeking higher education, additionally, should have full access to AT devices to assist them toward their success in acquiring college degrees and/or specific training leading to employment.

It is critical we provide access to AT for our veterans. These men and women who have sacrificed everything for their country deserve to come home and receive these services which will lead our wounded warriors to access our community, employment and independent living. Currently, very few receive these services as a result of inadequate federal services and lack of funding locally.

Seniors must have access to these devices for independence. Our systems must change policies and procedures, and in some cases, Nevada needs to provide statutes to more fully ensure timely access to these crucial services leading to independence.

Unfortunately, most children with disabilities do not receive appropriate AT in our school districts. And if they do, they are rarely able to take these aids home to do homework. How do we expect them to succeed when such shocking conditions exist within our school districts? Unfortunately, because of lack of funding and/or the capacity to match and draw down all federal money, our independent living and vocational rehabilitation services are often unable to provide timely access to assistive technology.

As shocking as it may seem, many go to job interviews having never received AT services and are unable to know how they will access a given job. We need to change policies and procedures as well as funding so that adults, as soon as they enter rehabilitation services, receive AT services as outlined above.

And finally, many older adults who are losing vision, hearing, and mobility, are unaware and unable to access AT and appropriate services which would help them to be more independent.

It is our conviction that by providing more timely and appropriate AT that, over the long run, Nevada will see greater contributions by persons with disabilities and seniors, as well as savings, as a result of employment and independence for the persons.

There have been some improvements over the last few years in these services, especially in the area of vocational rehabilitation. However, we still have a long way to go and we need legislation and changes to policies and procedures that will ensure greater independence through assistive technology for persons with disabilities, veterans, and seniors.

**Scott Youngs' draft:**

Position of the Nevada Assistive Technology Council

Acquiring appropriate assistive technology, for many people with disabilities, is critical to succeeding in life's pursuits including education, employment, living independently, civic access, and recreation. The Nevada Assistive Technology Council (NATC)

therefore asserts that all persons with disabilities, regardless of age or life situation, must have access to life empowering assistive technology to participate and succeed in modern society.

Assistive technology (AT) is any device or service that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of people with disabilities. Examples of AT include magnifying glasses, talking computers, software, phones, and Braille-output for persons who are visually impaired; communication devices for people who are unable to speak; adapted switches, keyboards, and controls for persons who have trouble accessing standard keyboards and other input devices; voice input or speaking through a phone or computer for those unable to type or persons who have learning or intellectual disabilities; and home modifications, vehicle adaptations, mobility devices such as wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers. AT may also include processes and systems that make a home or workplace more accessible, such as modifying some parts of job descriptions or changing the way paper files are accessed. Therefore, the Nevada Assistive Technology Council holds the following unyielding position.

Basic Principles:

1. Appropriate technology is critical to the quality of life of people with disabilities.
2. The State of Nevada has serious gaps in services, collaborations, and practices.
3. The Nevada Assistive Technology Council will operate as lead stakeholder.
4. Assistive Technology service requires an interdisciplinary team-based approach.

Priorities, practices, and goals:

1. Increase access and usability of assistive technology services statewide.
2. Foster inter-agency collaborations to improve service delivery.
3. Improve access to independent, person centered, and team based assessment, training and follow along services.
4. Support the creation of an accessible web-based system for education ??? to increase exposure to Assistive Technology training opportunities.
5. Support Assistive Technology Training & Awareness in the community; funding of all types of Assistive Technology services; and creation of a resource list for Assistive Technology throughout the state.

It is our conviction that by providing timely and appropriate AT that Nevada will see greater contributions by persons with disabilities, as well as savings, as a result of employment and independence gained. To accomplish this we need legislative support and changes to policies and procedures that will ensure appropriate access to and acquisition of assistive technology for persons with disabilities.

**John Rosenlund's draft:**

Position or White Paper on Assistive Technology by the Assistive Technology Council

Acquiring appropriate assistive technology (AT) devices and services are a necessity for many people with disabilities who are striving to succeed in life's pursuits including education, employment, living independently, and recreation. AT makes the essential difference in a child receiving an appropriate education, a person obtaining and maintain their employment, a veteran re-entering civilian life, the individual trying to regain some independence, or seniors wanting to remain active and engaged in the community. The Nevada Assistive Technology Council therefore asserts that all persons with disabilities, regardless of age or life situation, must have access to life empowering assistive technology to truly succeed.

Assistive technology (AT) is any device or service that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of people with disabilities. Examples of AT include magnifying glasses, talking computers, software, phones, and Braille-output for persons who are visually impaired; communication devices for people who are unable to speak; adapted switches, keyboards, and controls for persons who have trouble accessing standard keyboards and other input devices; voice input or speaking through a phone or computer for those unable to type or persons who have learning or intellectual disabilities; and home modifications, vehicle

adaptations, mobility devices such as wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers. AT may also include processes and systems that make a home or workplace more accessible, such as modifying some parts of job descriptions or changing the way paper files are accessed.

Therefore, it is our strong position that the Nevada Legislature work with state entities to increase access to and ensure funding for appropriate AT devices and services.

These services are critical to success:

- 1) Person-centered, independent assistive technology evaluations and assessments.
- 2) Purchase of appropriate AT based on assessment.
- 3) Installation and set-up of AT devices.
- 4) Adequate training on these devices.

It is our conviction that by providing timely and appropriate AT that Nevada will see greater contributions by persons with disabilities, as well as savings, as a result of employment and independence gained. To accomplish this we need legislative support and changes to policies and procedures that will ensure appropriate access to and acquisition of assistive technology for persons with disabilities.

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